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APRIL



X-MEN
DELUXE



EXCALIBUR

THE
NEW
HELLFIRE
CLUB

CAROL D'AMICO
WILLIE

LONDON'S BURNING

DIRECT EDITION



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stan lee presents

FIREBACK

IT'S
A TASTY
WORLD.

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ellis pacheco
writer penciler
bob wiacek
inker

ariane richard starkings
tenshock @comicaft
colorist lettering
malibu's hues separations
suzanne bob
gaffney harras
editor chief

EXCALIBUR Vol. 1, No. 96, April 1996. (ISSN #1043-9620) Published by MARVEL COMICS, Genent, California.
President: Stan Lee. Publisher: Office of Publication, 367 PARK AVENUE EAST, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017. SECOND CLASS
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FARMINGTON, CT 06031-1079. TELEPHONE (800) 343-5321. Printed in Canada.

IT'S 7 A.M. ON
THE EAST COAST
OF AMERICA.

JEAN GREY'S ALWAYS BEEN
AN EARLY RISER, AND SHE
ENJOYS THE MORNING HERE
AT THE WESTCHESTER COUNTY
MANSION THAT IS HOME TO
THE OUTLAW BAND OF HEROES,
THE X-MEN.



AND, AN INCURABLE OPTIMIST,
SHE STILL HOPES FOR THE
MORNING WHEN THE MAILMAN
USES THE MAILBOX, RATHER
THAN JUST FLINGING THE DAY'S
LETTERS THROUGH THE GATE.



'SCUSE
ME...

YES?
CAN
I HELP
YOU?

YES,
YES YOU
CAN...



...MY NAME'S
ALSTHAIRE STUART,
AND YOU HAVE TO HELP
ME GET IN TOUCH WITH
EXCALIBUR.

PLEASE --
I HAVE TO TALK
TO THEM BEFORE
THEY'RE ALL
KILLED!

AND IT'S 7 a.m. HERE, TOO, IN AN EXPENSIVE CHUNK OF NEW YORK UPSTATE REAL ESTATE.

SHINOBI SHAW, BLACK KING OF THE NEW YORK HELLFIRE CLUB, HAS YET TO GO TO SLEEP.

IDIOTS.

I HOPE THEY ALL CATCH A DISEASE.

SHINOBI CAN'T THIS PROBLEM OR WHATEVER IT IS WAIT?

I'M BORED...

IT'S THE LONDON BRANCH.

MY OBSERVERS ARE NOT PLEASED ME WITH THEIR REPORTS.

NONE OF THEM HAVE A SEAT ON THE INNER CIRCLE THERE, AND SO CANNOT GATHER ANYTHING REMOTELY USEFUL.

I WANT BRIAN BRADDOCK AT MUIR ISLAND.

THE ONLY SOLUTION LEFT IS THE ANNOYING ONE. BRING ME THE ROLODEX, MARTINE.

7 A.M. IN NEW YORK IS NOON ON THE MUIR ISLAND MEDICAL RESEARCH STATION, HOME OF THE MUTANT SUPER-HERO GROUP EXCALIBUR.

... IT WAS AMANDA'S IDEA.

APPARENTLY, SHE SAW A MAN WITH A SIMILAR LOOK ON THE LAST FLIGHT SHE WORKED.

SHE CLAIMS TO HAVE QUITE "FANCIED" HIM, BUT, YOU KNOW, IT WAS TIME FOR A CHANGE ANYWAY.

ONLY TOOK A COUPLE OF DAYS TO GROW THE BEARD...



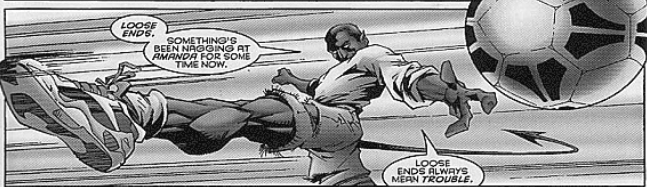
BE CAREFUL NOT TO SNEEZE, KURT.

IT MIGHT FALL OFF.

I'M DYING OF OLD AGE WAITING FOR YOU TO SHOOT, KURT.

HAS THE COLD AIR GOT TO YOUR UNPROTECTED BRAIN OR WHAT?







THE INNER CIRCLE OF THE LONDON HELLFIRE CLUB RARELY MEET AT SUCH AN EARLY HOUR OF THE AFTERNOON.

THESE PEOPLE — CAPTAINS OF INDUSTRY, THE RICH AND AMBITIOUS — TEND TO SAVE THEIR DARKER AGENDA UNTIL NIGHT.

I'LL ALLOW THAT THIS INNER CIRCLE IS ALREADY IN A TENSE STATE, FOR TWO SETS OF "ROYALTY" HAVE SELDOM EXISTED SIMULTANEOUSLY --

-- AND WE HAVE ALL DONE AN ADMIRABLE JOB OF HOLDING OUR TEMPERS AND AVOIDING ALL-OUT WAR BETWEEN BLACK AND RED --

-- BUT YOUR CHILDISH HASTE IN SUCH A COMPLEX PLAN WILL BREAK THIS COURT!

AND THAT DEBACLE AT THAT MILITARY COMPLEX, DREAM NAILS, IS ONLY THE FIRST SYMPTOM OF SUCH A DISASTROUS APPROACH.

IF YOU HADN'T PREVENTED ME FROM MOVING EVEN FASTER, BLACK KING, THAT MAIN GULLEY WOULD NEVER HAVE ESCAPED THE FACILITY.

IF I HAD HAD A FREE HAND, THE ALIEN EXPERIMENTATION AT THE DREAM NAILS STATION WOULD HAVE REMAINED SECRET.

AND WHO KNEW THE WISDOM
CREATURE POSSESSED A
CONSCIENCE?

GOD
KNOWS HE
KILLED MORE
PEOPLE THAN
I'VE EVER
MET.

NOT
THE POINT
I'M MAKING,
RED KING.

THESE FINAL STEPS
ARE...

... DELICATE.

MOVING
AT SPEED COULD
BREAK EVERYTHING
WE'VE BUILT.

COMMUNICATE
THAT TO YOUR
BLACK AIR
MRN.

SEE THAT
HIS EMPLOYERS
ARE INFORMED
OF MY WISHES.

DID YOU
GET THAT,
SCRIBES?

NATURALLY.

I
RECORD
ALL.

GOOD.

I'D
HATE TO
THINK I WOULD
HAVE TO MAKE
MY POINT
MORE...

... FORCEFULLY.

WHEN DO WE GET TO
BEGIN THOSE NEXT
STEPS, BLACK
KING?

IT
IS WHAT I
WAS INDUCTED
INTO THE INNER
CIRCLE
FOR.

AFTER ALL,
WHAT IS THE POINT
IN HAVING MAGIC IF
ONE DOESN'T USE IT?



AH, THE
LOVELY MRS.
AND MR. SUMMERS.
SCOTT, JEAN,
HOW ARE
YOU?

KURT,
KITTY, IT'S
GOOD TO SEE
YOU, EVEN THIS
EARLY IN THE
MORNING...

FIRST THINGS
FIRST: LET BRIAN
KNOW THAT THERE'S
BEEN NO CHANGE IN HIS
SISTER'S CONDITION.
PSYLOCKE'S STILL
COMATOSE...



OH,
NO.
KEEP
US POSTED,
JEAN.

OUR
PRAYERS ARE
WITH HER,
JEAN.

BY
THE WAY,
YOU HAVEN'T
HAD CHANCE
TO SPEAK TO
PETER SINCE HE
ARRIVED, HAVE
YOU?

COME
INTO CAMERA
RANGE,
PETER...



HELLO
PETER.

WE
HEARD
ABOUT WHAT
HAPPENED.
FEELING
BETTER?



MUCH
IMPROVED. THANK
YOU,
SCOTT.

BUT
I'M EAGER
TO LEARN
WHY YOU
CALLED SO
EARLY IN
YOUR DAY.



LET ME TURN OUR
CAMERA AROUND,
AND I'LL SHOW
YOU.

WE
THINK YOU
LOST SOMETHING.





PLEASE,
YOU HAVE TO
HELP ME --

ALISTAIRE
STUART?

-- HAVE
TO BRING ME
TO MUIR, THERE'S
SO MUCH TO
DO --



WHOA, SLOW
DOWN,
ALISTAIRE.

WHAT ARE
YOU DOING IN
AMERICAP?



ANOTHER
GOOD QUESTION
WOULD BE, "WHO
ARE YOU?"

ALISTAIRE
RAN THE BRITISH
GOVERNMENT'S
WEIRD HAPPENINGS
ORGANIZATION,
UNTIL BLACK AIR
REPLACED
THEM --

-- WE
ASSUMED HE'D
JUST BEEN
MOVED ON...



I HAD TO LEAVE BRITAIN.
THEY WEREN'T GOING TO
LET ME LIVE, I KNOW TOO
MUCH ABOUT WHAT
THEY'RE UP TO.

TOO
MUCH --



ALISTAIRE,
TOO MUCH
ABOUT
WHOP?

YOU'LL
REGRET
ASKING
THAT...



WHOP?

BLACK
AIR, OF
COURSE.



I'M GOING TO BEG THE MIDNIGHT RUNNER FROM BRIAN, PICK ALISTAIRE UP MYSELF. I'LL BE TAKING MEGGAN WITH ME, SHE'LL KEEP HIM CALM.



DO WE GET DEPUTY BADGES, AS IN THE WESTERNS?

PHONE.



THE MIDDAY SUN REFUSES TO BURN THE CHILL OFF THIS DEAD, SHATTERED, OF EASTERN ENGLAND.

SEBASTIAN SHAW, PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT TO BE DEAD AT THE HANDS OF HIS SON, SHINOBI, HAS CHOSEN THIS BARREN FIELD FOR A CLANDESTINE EXCHANGE.

SCRATCH, FROM BLACK AIR. YOU REMEMBER ME?

I'VE GOT THE FILES YOU REQUESTED. YOU GOT THE BOX?



YOUR EMPLOYERS KNOW THAT SEBASTIAN SHAW RESPECTS A BUSINESS DEAL, SCRATCH.

BOTH OF YOUR EMPLOYERS.

FUNNY.

YOU MADE USE OF THE LEGACY VIRUS DATA I HANDED OVER LAST TIME, I SAW.

NOT TOO CLOSE, PLEASE. MY OLD YOUNGERS ARE NERVOUS, IN THESE TROUBLED TIMES...

FINE.

GIVE ME THE BOX AND I WON'T UPSET THE LITTLE BOYS ANY MORE.



FOR THE FINE OF SICKENING
SHAW & TESSA SEE IS TESSA.®
-Szee

THIS
IS FROM A FILE
DOWNLOADED
TO MUIR BY
BISHOP, FROM
WESTCHESTER.

MOUNTJOY
IS FROM HIS TIME.
THE MID-21st
CENTURY, BY ALL
ACCOUNTS.

HE
QUALIFIES AS
A SHAPESHIFTER,
BUT A CLOSER
DESCRIPTION
WOULD BE SHAPE-
STEALER.

HE
ABSORBS LIVE
BODIES INTO HIS
OWN, AND CAN
USE THEIR FORM
WHILE, UM,
"DIGESTING"
THEM.

BISHOP
HAD A RUN-IN WITH
HIM RECENTLY, THE
UPSHOT OF WHICH WAS
HANDING HIM TO THE
AUTHORITIES.

FROM WHOM HE PROMPTLY
ESCAPED, VANISHING
IMMEDIATELY
AFTERWARDS.

BRIAN,
THIS GUY IS
TROUBLE.

I'VE ALWAYS
AVOIDED THE
HELLFIRE CLUB.

BETT'S
LIKED THE
POMP, AND
DAD SAID IT
HELPED HIM IN
BUSINESS,
BUT...

MAYBE
SHINOBI'S
LYING.

I
DON'T THINK I
CAN TAKE THAT
CHANCE.

THIS
ONE LIKES
KILLING, YOU
CAN SEE IT
IN HIS
EYES.

AND
IF HE IS
LYING -- THEN
WHAT ELSE IS
WAITING IN
LONDON?

SOMETHING'S
AFOOT.

PREP
THE RUNNER
FOR MR.
KITTY'S.

I'M
GOING TO
WRITE MEGGAN A
NOTE AND THEN
PACK.



ML AIR ISLANDS.

PETE WISDOM DOES NOT LIKE CLIMBING. IT LETS FRESH AIR INTO HIS LUNGS.

I'VE GOT YOU NOW, YOU BLOODY FLYING RAT.

NOW GIMME MY CLOTHES BACK.

I DON'T CARE WHOSE PET YOU ARE, I'M GOING TO SKIN YOU...

I AM DOUGLOCK.

I AM A MECHANICAL ENTITY.

I AM ALSO THE TEMPLATE OF A DEAD BOY CALLED DOUG RAMSEY.

I HAVE TRIED TO UNDERSTAND MY TWO PARTS THROUGH LOGIC.

LOGIC IS WRONG. WRONG APPROACH.

CHAOS IS THE WAY.

I HATE YOU.

BACK OFF OR I KILL THE CLOTHES.

TODAY, EVERYTHING WILL CHANGE. SAYING IT ALOUD GIVES IT... FORCE.

THE MOONLIGHT FLIT
CROSSES BACK INTO
BRITISH AIRSPACE,
AT THE CLOSE OF THE
AFTERNOON.

NOT
LONG NOW,
ALISTAIR.

DOESN'T
MATTER...

...PROBABLY
TOO LATE
ANYWAY...

...WHAT'S
THAT NOISE?

VERDAMMT!

ATTACK
HELICOPTERS --

-- MARKED
WITH THE
BLACK RIR
SYMBOL!

PLANE --

-- BEGIN EVASIVE
MANOEUVERING AND
ARM WEAPONS SYSTEMS
WITH A VIEW TO
CRIPPLING THOSE
CHOPPERS!

THE MOONLIGHT FLIT IS
A DEDICATED MEDICAL
VESSEL, AND SO DOES
NOT CARRY ARMMENTS.

BRIAN...!



Oh, NOT
AGAIN...

0102--200 FR 01

SWORDSTROKES

Dear Swordstrokes,

You rotten lot!! You couldn't let Kitty be happy for 5 minutes without it going wrong, could you? Come on guys, give her a break! Let her have a little happiness. She deserves it.

If I were her, I'd have bawled Mr. Rasputin out a lot more than any of them did. I mean, he tried to kill somebody out of jealousy! It's a good thing Wolverine wasn't there.

What's this about Meggan being physically powerful? I knew she could absorb power and thus strength from her surroundings (as in issue #3 and #23), but I didn't know she was like that normally. So how strong is she—as strong as Rogue, as Colossus, or even Brian?

And where's Lockheed? We haven't seen him since way back in issue #76, when the Douglock business started. Don't tell me the Phalanx got him???

I think the team needs a new set of enemies, not just Black Air. Maybe a new supervillain like Mr. Sinister, or a new team of villains. Someone to get their fists into.

My compliments to Warren Ellis. He's brought this comic alive, with some really dark and interesting stories. He has also brought the characters to life, especially Kitty, who is my favorite character of all.

Also, I love Casey Jones's artwork—any chance of him staying on permanently now?

One last point—no new members please! There'll be 10 in the team. Any more and some members will have to be left out for long periods.

Until Kitty runs off with Jamie Braddock and Rahne, opens a distillery, make mine EXCALIBUR! (And Marvel!)

Mark Shakespeare
(Address withheld by request)

We can tell you're a man who speaks his mind, Mark. We like that.

So, you thought Kitty went easy on Colossus? We think she knew him well enough to know he wasn't really trying to kill Pete Wisdom. It must have taken a great deal of control, actually, for Colossus not to have killed him immediately.

Lockheed's back, as you saw in this issue, safe from the Phalanx, thank you.

So you want some new villains, Mark? How 'bout an entire new London

Hellfire Club to go up against? And what do *you* think about that Mountjoy character? And then there's also Onslaught—oops! We're not supposed to tell you about that yet...

Thanks for the kudos. We'll send them on to Warren and Casey!

Dear Suzanne and Warren:

It pains me to inform you that a member of EXCALIBUR is missing. He has not appeared for several issues, and I am worried. A veteran of interstellar battles should not disappear simply because someone forgot to include him.

If you still cannot remember who is missing, here is a short description: Draconian male, six limbs, purple skin, yellow eyes, fiery breath, etc. Lockheed! He is the reason I collected every issue of EXCALIBUR to date, and my favorite character in the Marvel Universe. Please return this diminutive dragon to the pages of EXCALIBUR at all haste. Make mine Marvel!

Jon Prive
Bucks County, PA

Your wish is our command, Jon! Do you get the feeling Lockheed doesn't like Pete very much?

Dear Swordstrokes,

First of all, I want to tell you that I vowed never to read EXCALIBUR again unless Alan Davis or Chris Claremont was involved. However...with this letter you can see that I have broken my vow.

Enter issue #92. I bought this only because I wanted to see how Kitty and Colossus would resolve their feelings for each other. Then I got curious, so I picked up #93, and now I'm hooked again.

Warren Ellis is great! In only these two issues I can see he has turned Kurt into a strong person capable of leading EXCALIBUR. He also has a firm grip, it would seem, on the other cast members.

I was upset at seeing Doug "alive", at least somewhat. His death served a purpose back in the New Mutants, and it was a shame to revive him.

I take it the Amanda in the book is Kurt's favorite witch, Amanda Sefton.

Casey Jones is a wonderful find. I love his Nightcrawler. He also draws Kitty as she should be—a young woman—not some twelve-year-old girl.

Well, it will take me a while to get used to all the new changes that have occurred. However, I am back for the long haul and things are looking good.

Is it true that Carlos Pacheco is going to be the new penciler soon? One last question before I go: Are Meggan and Brian still engaged, and does Brian still wear the Captain Britain suit?

Chris Wright
P.O. Box 333
Moody, ME 04054

Thanks for giving us a second chance, Chris! We were hoping you'd come back... Your letter addressed so many points. Let's get to 'em!

First, you're right. Doug Ramsey's death when he was a member of the New Mutants (issue #60 to be exact) did serve an important purpose. He made the ultimate sacrifice for his friend and teammate, Rahne, and she will never forget that. Douglock, so perfectly characterized by Warren as a dead boy with wires, is not Doug. The Phalanx used the genetic template they secured from the remains of Warlock after the Extinction Agenda (check out the trade paperback!) to create the techno-organic being known as Douglock. It took the shape of Doug because Warlock and Doug had soul-merged (again, back in the NEW MUTANTS) and Warlock still had "memories" of Doug encoded into his very structure.

Down the road, it will be interesting to see where Douglock differs from Doug, don't ya think?

Phew!

Yep! This is the Amanda Sefton, Kurt's favorite sorceress and Night attendant.

On the money again, Chris. We think Casey is terrific, too.

Two for two, Chris. Carlos Pacheco is the new regular artist on EXCALIBUR and we're thrilled to have him. He'll be helping out on a couple of issues of FANTASTIC FOUR (#415 and #416 to be specific) so Casey will be helping us out from time to time. Are we lucky, or what?

Last but certainly not least, Meggan and Brian are indeed still engaged. As to whether Brian still wears the Captain Britain suit—who knows what he does in his private quarters...?

Excalibur.

Wow! Excalibur #92 rocked! It was good to see Colossus back. It is also good to see EXCALIBUR coming out with a lot of good stories. I'll admit, EXCALIBUR was never a favorite of mine and I only bought it every once and a while, but after the Age of Apocalypse storyline I decided I would start picking up every X-Men related title regularly.

When I saw Colossus on the cover of EXCALIBUR #92 I grabbed it right away. The fight between Colossus and Pete Wisdom was awesome! Two cool characters in a great fight.

I would like to ask a few questions if you wouldn't mind answering them.

1) Is Colossus going to join the team? I hope so. With all he's been through, he needs a home.

2) What exactly is Pete Wisdom's power?

3) What is the Future Tense thing you talked about in EXCALIBUR #93?

Well, I am enjoying the recent stories and love the characters, and you can bet I'll be picking up EXCALIBUR for a long time. Keep up the good work!

Robert Jones
(Address withheld by request)

Of course we wouldn't mind, Robert!

1) We hope Colossus feels comfortable enough to stay. His friends could help him through his rougher days.

2) Pete Wisdom's mutant power is called the hot-knife. With it he can generate a spray of hot-knives, blade-shaped plates of pure heat--as hot as the heart of the sun!

3) Didja see issue #94? Nuff said!

We'll do our best to maintain your high standards, Rob! (Can we call you Rob, Robert?)

Dear Excalibur Pen Masters,

I'm going to begin by saying that your title is thrilling, very true-to-life, ambitious, and an enthralling all-in-one talent-laden piece of work. To put it another way, of the six new X-titles I purchased this week, yours was the most powerful. EXCALIBUR #92 was a profound examination of the human condition seen through the frightened eyes of Colossus and of those who know him best.

You guys did a magnificent job portraying the culmination of Colossus's alienation of soul transformed into fury at the sight of Pete Wisdom and Kitty Pryde in their embrace.

Most fans will know this has been a moment long in the making. His long pent-up emotions sought a once-and-for-all release. It reminded me of the Eagles song, "Heartache Tonight" when it says "Somebody's gonna hurt someone 'fore the night is through."

As a firm believer in the validity and inevitability of a Colossus-Kitty Pryde

union, I was glad to see that Wisdom still lives. You folks did a very good thing in keeping him alive. If Colossus had killed him, neither he nor his friends could ever fully forgive him. Colossus is NOT a murderer. Period. You guys have restored my faith in Colossus and in the inestimable value of your work.

In addition, you have preserved the honor of Colossus's character. The conversations with Moira, Kurt, and Kitty as well as the world of hurt and tears we see magnified in the one panel with Rahne bring about an unmistakable change for the better in him. It is saddening to see how far he has fallen, yet moving to see how far he has now come toward the restoration of his soul and confidence by the generosity and love from Kurt and Kitty. All this makes your book worth reading.

This has to be particularly hard on Kitty. She'll now have to face the everyday presence of the two men she most loves. Bet she hasn't ever had two men vying for her affections. Still, the last thing Kitty says to Colossus in #92 holds great promise for their future.

It is my hope that she will see that he has never stopped caring for her, that he has difficulty seeing through the fog of his trapped emotions, and that they both blossom with unbridled confidence when they are in love with each other. I await the resolution of their differences with eager patience.

Since the Age of Apocalypse, your stories have never been more solid, with your characterizations flowing well from one issue to the next. Rory's becoming Ahab is a good example. Perhaps most importantly, you have resolved plot lines with satisfaction, and introduced intriguing new plot lines to keep us hooked.

Well, I think I've said enough for now. Expect to hear more from me.

Rockwell N. Greene
10201 W. 80 Street #35
Overland Park, KS 66204

Beautifully put, Mr. Greene. It appears you have true insight into Colossus. Also, you're right about Kitty. Whether or not she shows it to her teammates, this must be tough on her.

Then again, how often does a girl get surrounded by her admirers?

Dear Swordstrokes,

It is now 11:00 p.m. in Michigan. The first letter I sent to you was pretty pathetic, so I'll try again. Here goes...

I'm a cartoonist, a simple person, so don't expect anything fancy. Let me tell you how I got to collecting your wonderful comic. 'Bout three years ago I started really collecting comics. First 'Sonic', then 'Turtles', to 'Archie', 'Animaniacs', my mother's 'X-Men' comics, and finally to EXCALIBUR.

I like EXCALIBUR for its action. This is

how the action in other comics goes. 'I hit you, you hit me, we go in for the kill, oops, there's been a mistake. I'm sorry let's team up against the real bad guy.' Just when you're on your toes to look over into the big fighting ring, they're all of a sudden playing pool at hip level. Up, down. Up, down. It kills me!

But Marvel comics? Oh no, the action just keeps on rolling. Even your 'R & R' issue (#91) was good. And it didn't have any physical violence.

And someone's always making some sort of joke to keep up a bit of a comedic side. Whether it's the writers or fans, something's always gotten me to giggle. Anyways, I have some questions.

1) When will the Kurt of this timeline find out Raven is his mother?

2) Since I'm a fairly new collector to this series will someone tell me what happened to Lockheed?

I can't think of anything else to ask right now. It's now 11:39 p.m., I'm tired. Good night, and may a lucky star grant all of your Marvelous wishes tonight... or whenever.

Yikes! My parents are home! Later!
Jamie Binnington
4940 Weatherford
Coloma, MI

Sweet dreams, Jamie. But before you drift off, let's clear up a couple of things for your curious mind.

1) Good question! Kurt's suspicions of who his mother is were confirmed in X-MEN UNLIMITED #4. However, we now think that it may have been another of Mystique's manipulations--but that's a story for another time, Jamie!

2) Lockheed's back and the details will be revealed--slowly!

Hope ya didn't get caught staying up too late, Jamie!

Dear Swordstrokes,

I really like the direction the book is taking. I really enjoy Mr. Ellis's writing, but I do have one concern. Where is Lockheed?

I know that it isn't always easy to write for other people's characters and sometimes you do not know what to do with them but you can't just act as if they do not exist. Face it, it must be tough writing Meggan or Douglock sometimes, too, but Lockheed isn't like Kitty's pet cat. He is a sentient and intelligent extraterrestrial. He may look unusual, but so do a lot of X-Men. Lockheed has been a valuable member of both the X-Men and Excalibur. Please don't think of him as some cute pet. He can kick some major butt and has gone into battle many times with Kitty and with her friends. Pete Wisdom and Lockheed would make great friends too.

Catherine D. Kobasiuk
111 Hickory Road
Mastic Beach, NY 11951

Well, as you can tell, Catherine, he's back. As for friendship between Pete and Lockheed...well, miracles can happen, but...

Dear X-people,

Re: EXCALIBUR #92

On the cover it says "Colossus Agonistes!". What the heck is Agonistes? Did you mean Agonizes? I tried looking up Agonistes in the dictionary and it's not there. My dictionary is a couple of years old, but I don't think it's so old that it would not have this word in there. Please help me and clear this up. This is causing me sleepless nights!

The fight between Pete and Peter was awesome. I'm just waiting to find out how much Pete will hate Peter for almost killing him. Please do not get rid of a single character in this book. The many characters make it that much more interesting to see how they interact with each other.

Tom Malinowski
331 Whitehall Terrace
Bloomington, IL 61018-1384

Tom, (or can we call you "Sleepless in Bloomington?") Agonistes is a Latin word. It means Colossus-just-pulverized-Kitty's-boyfriend-and-boy-is-he-gonna-get-it-now!

Glad we could be of help.

Hey Suzanne,

I thought Colossus would be a little jealous, but he totally shocked me. I thought for sure Wisdom was going to die, and I had just gotten to like the guy.

Colossus went nuts! I did not realize the baggage he carried with him, but afterward I could understand why he did go a bit crazy. I guess the best part of the situation is that Wisdom is going to live.

The other good thing is that Colossus is going to stay. It will be interesting to see how the others treat him, and if they can trust him again.

Nightcrawler, at least, got through to him, and, like a good friend, will help him get on his feet.

The saddest part of the whole issue was the reaction of Rahne. Al at once, she lost a "brother" and maybe her hero.

So far this is the best story I have read in EXCALIBUR. It caught me by surprise and left me speechless. This was simply an excellent issue.

Doud Ohmer
1553 Nancy Street
Covington, KY 41014

Thanks, Doud. We love these characters, too. It's great to hear we were able to move you. That's our highest goal here at the House of Ideas.

Dear Swordstrokes,

As a faithful X-fan for more than 12

years, I have enjoyed reading the triumphs and tragedies of the X-Men in all of their various incarnations. While they all fight for Xavier's dream (in one way or another), it is always their sense of family and unity that is the source of the X-Men's strength. This has never been more apparent than in the heyday of the "New" X-Men, the second generation consisting of Cyclops, Storm, Wolverine, Nightcrawler, Kitty Pryde, and Colossus. In one classic early 1980's issues of UNCANNY X-MEN clearly demonstrate (issues 121-171), these X-Men operated as a tight, formidable unit that were always there for each other. More than teammates, they were family first.

Now it's 1995, and things have certainly changed. With the rising mutant hysteria, new villains, and the Legacy Virus, times are definitely tougher. To meet these new challenges, the family has grown considerably, spawning two teams of X-Men, the newly formed Generation X, X-Force, X-Factor, and of course, Excalibur.

Although I was not happy with the idea of two of my favorite X-Men (Nightcrawler and Kitty Pryde) heading off to England, I took it in patient stride. Unfortunately, for too long the book was unfocused, lacking direction and X-continuity. But with Warren Ellis now handling the writing chores, not to mention the nice addition of Casey Jones (keep him around!), Excalibur has finally returned to the great X-heritage of basing the team as a family.

Things were going great until EXCALIBUR #92, though. While I was incredibly happy to see the long anticipated appearance of Colossus in these pages I was horrified to see how it happened!!

Although Colossus was wrong for knocking the living daylight out of Pete Wisdom, I could not believe how Excalibur treated Colossus, in particular Nightcrawler. To call Colossus a "child" and say that he barely knows him was disheartening. How could Nightcrawler say such things!!! They were family, fighting alongside one another in countless battles. Despite his recent stint with Magneto and the Acolytes, Kurt knows what Colossus has been through. Having lost his parents, his brother, and then Illyana, ol' Petey is obviously hurting inside. Moreover, Kurt knew that Colossus would eventually get chewed out by Kitty, and understandably so, so why did he have to give him the third degree? Instead of being a friend for someone in need, Kurt acted like a cold psychiatrist. Surely being leader of Excalibur has not changed Nightcrawler so much that he can't extend a more helpful hand to a long-time friend!

Now that Colossus is back, please don't turn the whole X-Family against him. It would truly be sad to think that the X-teams can forgive and forget the crimes of cold-blooded criminals like Sabretooth

and Mystique (and even worse, let them join the X-Family), but when it comes to one of their own, they turn their backs.

Until Moira decides to take a vacation and puts Wolfsbane in a kennel, make mine Marvel.

Steven J. Wolfe
Mexico City, Mexico

We see your point, Steven, but we think that Kurt was being a friend to Colossus—even when he was, as you say, chewing him out. Sometimes that's the first thing we need from our friends when we start crossing the line between acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

As you see, their friendship has survived this ordeal, and probably grown from it. Colossus is doing his best to make amends, and we're sure the X groups will be receptive to him. Okay, Steve?

NEXT ISSUE:
JOIN US FOR
HARPOONS,
DOGFIGHTS,
AND
TURNCOATS!



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IF YOU DON'T WANT YOUR
FULL NAME AND ADDRESS PRINTED,
BE SURE TO TELL US!

SUZANNE
EDITOR
GAFFNEY

BOB
CHIEF
HARRAS

Design by COMICRAFT

THE MOONLIGHT FLIT EASES UP INTO THE AFTERNOON SKY.

BUOYED ON A GENTLE WAVE OF TRAMED GRAVITY.

THE VESSEL'S SHIPWRIGHT, BRIAN BRADDOCK, TRUSTS KURT WAGNER TO PERFORM THE FLIT'S PROVING FLIGHT.

IT'S GOT A LOT OF HIM IN IT. HE DOESN'T WANT TO FIGHT ANY MORE.

HE JUST WANTS TO FIX THINGS.

COMPUTER.

TAKE THE CALLER OFF HOLD.

SHAW, THIS IS BRADDOCK.

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I WANT YOU TO REJOIN THE LONDON HELLFIRE CLUB.

IT'S BRIAN'S GIFT TO THE MUIR ISLAND STATION --

-- A HYPERSONIC MEDICAL VESSEL, ENTIRELY VOICE-ACTIVATED FOR EASY USE, EQUIPPED FOR THE WORST HUMAN CRISES.



YOU
AND YOUR SISTER
BOTH HOLD CLAIM
TO YOUR FATHER'S
SEAT AS BISHOP
UPON THE LONDON
CHAPTER'S INNER
CIRCLE.

YOUR
SISTER VISITED
THE CLUB OFTEN IN
HER YOUNGER
DAYS...

... BUT
SHE IS...
INDISPOSED, I
UNDERSTAND.

THE
LONDON
CHAPTER HAS
CHANGED, BRADDOCK.

IT
HAS BECOME
A THREAT
BOTH TO ME
AND TO YOU.

THEY
ARE MOVING
FUNDS IN AND OUT
OF THE BRITISH
GOVERNMENT.

THEY
HAVE OBTAINED
TELEPATHS TO
SCREEN OFF THE
THOUGHTS OF
THE INNER
CIRCLE.

CERTAIN
STRANGE
"CONSULTANTS"
HAVE BEEN SEEN
ENTERING THEIR
LONDON
OFFICES.

THERE
HAVE BEEN...
MURDERS.

MY
OBSERVER
CANNOT
GET CLOSE
ENOUGH.

IT
WOULD BE IN
BOTH OUR
INTERESTS FOR
YOU TO INFILTRATE
THE CLUB AND
DIVINE THEIR TRUE
INTENT IN ALL
THIS.

OH,
AND ONE
OTHER POINT OF
INTEREST:

A PERSON
FROM AMERICA HAS
ALREADY INFILTRATED
THE INNER
CIRCLE.

THE
TRACES OF
HIS PASSING ARE
UNMISTAKABLE.

ONE
OF THE INNER
CIRCLE -- WE
DON'T KNOW
WHICH -- IS IN
DISGUISE.

A
VERY SPECIAL
DISGUISE.

ONE
OF THEM IS
THE MAN CALLED
MOUNTJOY.

SCREEN
OFF.

CHECK OUT THE DISGUISE LIMITED
SERIES FOR THE SCOOP ON
MOUNTJOY. - Suzie